



NASCOE News Flash

Meeting with Management
July 9-11, 2018

NASCOE Vice President Brandon Wilson and I traveled to Washington, DC July 8-11, 2018 to meet with management. The purpose of the trip was to complete a holdover negotiation item from our April meeting, consult on several items that had been submitted by members during the negotiation process and to get an update on the workload tool and staffing model. We had three full days of meetings and want to thank Administrator Fordyce and his leadership team for their open doors and the willingness to meet and discuss items of concern. I will not have enough space in this article to fully discuss every topic we worked on during the trip. I will however, try to highlight as much as we can.

We were able to meet with Administrator Fordyce on a couple of occasions. The first meeting was with DAFO staff members, Acting Associate Administrator Peterson and contractors who were working on the staffing model and workload tool. This meeting was designed to give NASCOE leadership a deeper look into the Staffing Model, Optimally Productive Office (OPO) Model and the workload analytics which are used to fuel both models. We were also shown how the SED's can use the various resources contained in the tool to analyze their state as they and their leadership teams determine where staffing is most needed. NASCOE membership will have an opportunity during the general session on Thursday of the National Convention to see a presentation provided by DAFO on the Staffing Model and Optimally Productive Office.

The second meeting with Administrator Fordyce and his team focused more on the concerns that NASCOE has heard from membership. These concerns include the lack of workload/staffing information shared by some states, an update on hiring and staffing, clarification on backfilling internal hires and the upcoming farm bill. When asked about the Staffing Model and OPO being available for all employees to see, Mr. Fordyce explained there are future enhancements planned and until that is completed, the SED's have been asked to not share the tool itself. However, it should be noted that SED's are not restricted in discussing and sharing FY-18 ceilings and the workload analytics with all employees. State associations are encouraged to work with their SED about the availability of the data.

While we were in town, the Administrator and his senior staff were meeting in preparation of the next release of hiring, which will include backfilling vacancies created by an internal hire. We also discussed the money that was designated in the omnibus appropriation for hiring up to 200 FLOTS. That money was earmarked for FY-18 and FY19 and any money not spent by the end of FY-19 will be forfeited by the agency. We also discussed the upcoming farm bill and comparisons between the house and senate versions.



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There were many consultation items including revising data collection forms, revising and creating reports, requesting training and updating software. NASCOE met with several people representing several divisions on these consultation items. We also met with the Office of External Affairs to negotiate the remaining item from the 2018 negotiation session. These were productive meetings and we will try to give updates in future communications as these items progress to resolution.

I would like to close this update with some final comments about the 2018 National Convention coming up in Sioux Falls, SD. We have a tremendous agenda planned for you with attendance by Undersecretary Northey, Administrator Fordyce, Acting Associate Administrator Peterson, Acting DAFP Brad Karmen, Acting DAFO Linda Treese, FPAC CIO Darren Ash, FPAC Business Center Chief of Staff Terri Meighan and DAFO nominee Peggy Browne. I know that the time until the convention is short, so I hope you have already made your plans. The South Dakota Association has worked tirelessly to make this an experience not to miss. Hope to see you there.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Ray
NASCOE President